

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAR ES 01936 01 OF 02 050915Z

ACTION AF-10

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R 050840Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8516

INFO AMCONSUL ZANZIBAR

USICA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 1936

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, TZ

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: RECENT TANZANIAN ACTIONS

SUMMARY. SEVERAL ACTIONS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN TAKEN BY BOTH MAINLAND TANZANIAN AND ZANZIBAR GOVERNMENTS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD, ESPECIALLY IN OBSERVING RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL. SEVERAL LONG-TERM POLITICAL DETAINEES HAVE BEEN RELEASED, A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF CRIMINALS HAVE BEEN FREED, AND THERE IS NO LONGER A PROSPECT OF ANY DEATH SENTENCES BEING CARRIED OUT FOR THE 1972 ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW THE ZANZIBAR GOVERNMENT. THESE ACTIONS ARE MOST PROBABLY INTENDED TO IMPROVE TANZANIA'S IMAGE IN THE WEST, PARTICULARLY IN THE US. WHILE PRESIDENT NYERERE AND OTHER TANGOV LEADERS ARE SYMPATHETIC TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN GENERAL, TANGOV HAS SHOWN NO INCLINATION SO FAR TO DEPART FROM ITS POLICY OF MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS, WHICH IS GIVEN FAR GREATER EMPHASIS THAN POLITICAL OR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. END SUMMARY.

1. THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS IN TANZANIA THUS FAR IN 1978 IN HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY INCLUDE THE ADOPTION OF A MORE PRAGMATIC APPROACH TOWARD INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY, WHICH PUTS LESS PRESSURE ON PEASANTS TO ENTER INTO COLLECTIVIZED

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PAGE 02 DAR ES 01936 01 OF 02 050915Z

FARMING. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS ARE:

- DECISION IN JANUARY TO RELEASE 20 POLITICAL DETAINEES HELD ON BEHALF OF SEVERAL SOUTHERN AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, MOST NOTABLY SWAPO. SOME, BUT NOT ALL, HAVE BEEN RELEASED. TANGOV APPARENTLY INTENDS TO RELEASE ALL (DAR ES SALAAM 608).

- RELEASE IN EARLY FEBRUARY OF 26 POLITICAL DETAINEES, INCLUDING TWO BROTHERS OF OSCAR KAMBONA, TANGOV'S FOREMOST OPPONENT- IN-EXILE. KAMBONA BROTHERS WERE VERY WELL KNOWN TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS (DAR ES SALAAM 536).

- AMNESTY IN EARLY FEBRUARY FOR 7,083 CRIMINALS TO MARK FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF BIRTH OF NATION'S SINGLE PARTY (DAR ES SALAAM 536).

- THE ONGOING TRIAL, BEGUN IN MARCH, OF TWO POLICEMEN FOR THE TORTURE OF A CRIMINAL SUSPECT.

- COMMUTATION BY ZANZIBAR REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN JUMBE OF DEATH SENTENCES AT THE END OF MARCH OF 3 PEOPLE FOR PARTICIPATING IN 1972 ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW ZANZIBAR'S GOVERNMENT, DURING WHICH ABEID AMANI KARUME, LEADER OF ZANZIBAR AND FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF TANZANIA, WAS ASSASSINATED (ZANZIBAR 50).

- TANGOV DECISION, ANNOUNCED IN EARLY APRIL, TO COMPENSATE THOSE WHOSE HOUSES WERE DEMOLISHED DURING FORCED RESETTLEMENT IN COLLECTIVE VILLAGES. TOTAL PAYMENT, OVER 2 YEARS, IS ESTIMATED AT \$7.5 MILLION.

- AMNESTY DECLARED APRIL 26 BY PRESIDENT NYERERE FOR 13 DETAINEES HELD ON MAINLAND TANZANIA FOR THEIR PART IN 1972 ZANZIBAR COUP ATTEMPT. GROUP INCLUDED ABDULRAHMAN BABU, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 DAR ES 01936 01 OF 02 050915Z

ESTABLISHED BY ZANZIBAR LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AS COUP ATTEMPT LEADER. BABU, WELL KNOWN TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS, AND 3 OTHERS IN THIS GROUP WERE SENTENCED TO DEATH IN ZANZIBAR IN ABSENTIA (DAR ES SALAAM 1841).

- RELEASE ON ZANZIBAR MAY 1 BY MADAGASCAR REVCO CHAIRMAN (AND TANZANIAN VICE PRESIDENT) JUMBE OF 154 CONVICTS, INCLUDING 8 CONVICTED PLOTTERS IN 1972 COUP ATTEMPT. LONG PRISON TERMS OF 14 OTHERS CONVICTED OF PARTICIPATING IN COUP ATTEMPT WERE REDUCED TO 10 YEARS.

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PAGE 01 DAR ES 01936 02 OF 02 050935Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 1936

2. IN TANZANIA'S THINKING ON HUMAN RIGHTS, THE HIGHEST PRIORITY GOES TO MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS. IN BROAD TERMS, IT HAS DECIDED ON A SOCIALIST COURSE TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL. IT HAS AT PRESENT NO PLACE FOR A FULL EXERCISE OF POLITICAL OR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS BECAUSE OF ITS FEAR THAT SOME WOULD USE THEIR LICENSE TO CHALLENGE EFFECTIVELY THE SOCIALIST COURSE. PRESIDENT NYERERE AND OTHER TANGOV LEADERS ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THESE RIGHTS, BUT CONSIDER THAT TANZANIA HAS NOT REACHED THE STAGE WHERE THEY CAN BE FULLY AFFORDED.

3. TANGOV, HOWEVER, DOES APPARENTLY BELIEVE THAT IT CAN IMPROVE ITS IMAGE, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. THE ACTIONS LISTED ABOVE SEEM INTENDED TO MEET THE POINTS ON WHICH IT HAS BEEN MOST CRITICIZED: THE KAMBONA BROTHERS, THE ZANZIBAR TREASON TRIAL, BABU, AND FORCED MOVEMENT INTO VILLAGES. THE POLITICAL DETAINEES RELEASED ARE PROBABLY NO LONGER A THREAT. THOSE STILL FEARED BY TANGOV WILL STAY LOCKED UP FOR AT LEAST A WHILE LONGER, BUT IMAGE-IMPROVING AUGURS WELL FOR THE FUTURE EVEN IF IT DOESN'T MEAN EMPTYING THE JAIL HOUSE NOW.

4. A FEW REASONS FOR TANZANIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIONS COME TO MIND. ITS OWN TREND TOWARDS PRAGMATISM HAS SOMEWHAT EASED DOMESTIC TENSIONS AND HAS CREATED A BETTER CLIMATE FOR INDIVIDUAL

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PAGE 02 DAR ES 01936 02 OF 02 050935Z

RIGHTS. AT THE SAME TIME, TANZANIA IS PROBABLY TRYING TO IMPROVE ITS IMAGE IN THE EYES OF THE WEST, WITH WHICH TANZANIA APPEARS TO BE SEEKING A NEW RELATIONSHIP. THIS IS MOST OBVIOUS IN ITS COOPERATION ON FINDING SOLUTIONS ON RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA. IT IS ALSO EVIDENT IN ITS SEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT AID, INVESTMENT CAPITAL, AND TRADE TIES.

5. IN ALL THIS THE UNDATED STATES LOOMS LARGE. PRESIDENT NYERERE UNDERSTANDS AND RESPECTS PRESIDENT CARTER'S CONCERN WITH HUMAN RIGHTS. OUR HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION PLAN (DAR ES SALAAM 153) EMPHASIZES THE FILTRATION OF US IDEAS ON HUMAN RIGHTS INTO

TANZANIAN PRACTICE. VISITS BY SECRETARY VANCE AND AMBASSADOR YOUNG HAVE HELPED REINFORCE THE US VIEWPOINT. NOTHING COULD HAVE BEEN MORE USEFUL THAN NYERERE'S MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER IN WASHINGTON IN AUGUST 1977. ALL OF THESE CONTACTS TOOK PLACE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AND, PROBABLY MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, IT IS US CONCERN FOR THE RIGHTS OF AFRICANS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA THAT HAS MADE NYERERE WITH TO IMPROVE TANZANIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE AT HOME.

6. WE THINK WE HAVE THE RIGHT FORMULA FOR INFLUENCING TANZANIA

ON HUMAN RIGHTS. THE FOCUS OF OUR AID PROGRAM - IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS OF THE RURAL POOR - IS RIGHT IN LINE WITH TANGOV'S

PRIORITIES. TANGOV WOULD, HOWEVER, TAKE A VERY DIM VIEW OF PROJECTS AND THAT SEEMED TO STRENGTHEN POLITICAL RIGHTS OF A PARTICULAR GROUP (STATE 101448, STATE 113365). THE NEXT STEP WILL BE TO TELL SENIOR TANGOV OFFICIALS, PERHAPS NYERERE HIMSELF, THAT WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY RECENT HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIONS IN TANZANIA.
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